UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FIFTIETH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL AND DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE (FOURTH COMMITTEE)
22nd meeting
held on
Thursday, 16 November
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 22nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MUTHAURA (Kenya)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 86: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (continued)

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of the publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-794, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.4/50/SR.22
19 December 1995
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

95-82308 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 86: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (continued) (A/49/875-S/1995/235, A/49/876, A/49/886-S/1995/276; A/50/137-S/1995/295, A/50/215-S/1995/475, A/50/230, A/50/254-S/1995/501, A/50/437, A/50/572, A/50/702-S/1995/900, A/50/711-S/1995/911; A/C.4/50/L.10*)

1. Miss WILLIAMS (Jamaica), referring to the statement by the Deputy Prime Minister of Jamaica in the General Assembly, said that the current regional and civil conflicts being waged against the backdrop of ethnic and religious antagonism demanded that greater emphasis should be placed on preventive diplomacy so as to defuse tensions before they escalated into the violence and bloodshed that had taken place in the Balkans and Central Africa. In that regard, urgent action must be taken to achieve a rapid deployment capability. Her delegation welcomed the very constructive proposals contained in the supplement to "An Agenda for Peace" (A/50/60-S/1995/1), especially in the light of the inescapable link between economic and social development and the attainment of peace and security.

2. Her delegation shared the view that adequate financial resources were crucial to the effectiveness of peace-keeping operations and considered that such resources should not be at the expense of resources for United Nations development activities. Her delegation also concurred with the view of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations that the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations should be strictly observed when defining and implementing peace-keeping operations, and supported the finding that special attention should be given to improving the capacity to respond rapidly and effectively to emergency situations in Africa. Measures other than the system of stand-by arrangements could also be taken to enhance the capacity of United Nations peace-keeping operations to deploy rapidly; such measures could involve the use of regional organizations as a cost-effective measure.

3. Bearing in mind the disturbing fact that, since 1945, 1,280 United Nations peace-keepers from 65 countries had been killed, her delegation fully supported General Assembly resolution 49/59 of 9 December 1994 and considered that the safety of personnel should be made an integral part of the planning of all United Nations peace-keeping operations. Her delegation fully supported the request made to the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations contained in draft resolution A/C.4/50/L.10 "to consider the expansion of its membership" as a matter of priority; such expansion should seek to include troop-contributing States.

4. Mrs. COBO said that the United Nations was currently conducting 16 peace-keeping operations involving approximately 60,000 people. In the opinion of her delegation, no peace-keeping operation should be established without the request and full consent of the parties affected by the conflict. Such operations should be multilateral and completely impartial. Peace-keeping operations were only one of the Organization's means of keeping peace and should be considered

as temporary measures that could not be a substitute for efforts to achieve a political settlement of a conflict.

5. Her delegation considered that the mandate of a peace-keeping operation should be clearly defined in terms of its length, planning and the Organization's capabilities as well as financing. It was essential to ensure transparency in relations between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries.

6. Her delegation reaffirmed its position regarding the need for the United Nations to avoid the practice of delegating responsibility for peace-keeping operations to national or multinational forces. With regard to policy in the field of information support, her delegation considered that it was essential to disseminate information among the general public and also among Member States.

7. In view of the increasing complexity of peace-keeping operations and the need to reconsider some of the ideas about the way in which they should be carried out, the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations should play a very important role. In that regard, her delegation supported the proposal to transform the Special Committee into an open-ended committee and also supported the paragraph of the draft resolution that referred to the need to consider the expansion of the Special Committee.

8. Mr. NEGA (Ethiopia) said that his delegation fully shared the view that respect for the principles of consent, impartiality and non-use of force was crucial for the success of United Nations peace-keeping operations, and that failures in certain operations were largely attributable to violations of those basic principles. United Nations peace-keeping operations were joint undertakings of the international community aimed at creating an atmosphere conducive to the peaceful settlement of conflicts. Any change in the mandate of peace-keeping operations should remain the collective responsibility of the United Nations. Selective treatment of conflicts in different parts of the world should not be allowed, and all decisions relating to United Nations peace-keeping operations should be based solely on the desire and obligation of the international community to ensure and promote peace and security in all parts of the world.

9. The success of United Nations peace-keeping operations also depended on the availability of adequate resources, in particular financial resources. Over the past few years, the United Nations peace-keeping budget had increased significantly in comparison with the Organization's regular budget. In spite of that, most United Nations peace-keeping operations continued to face serious financial problems arising from a considerable amount of contributions owed by Member States. The financing of peace-keeping operations was the collective responsibility of all Member States pursuant to Article 17, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations and, to that end, timely full payment by all Member States of their dues was a matter of great importance. The provision of adequate financial resources should also be accompanied by measures aimed at streamlining the rules and procedures relating to reimbursements to troop-contributing countries. On the question of compensation arrangements in respect of death and disability benefits, his delegation welcomed the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/49/906 and urged the General Assembly

to adopt a fair and equitable arrangement that would ensure equal treatment of Member States and the speedy settlement of claims for death and disability.

10. Since its inception, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) had actively engaged in the peaceful resolution of disputes on the African continent. At the same time, African countries, including Ethiopia, had participated and continued to participate in the various United Nations peace-keeping operations both in Africa and other parts of the world. In order to enhance Africa's capability to deal with conflict situations, OAU had established the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. The primary objective of the Mechanism was the anticipation and prevention of conflicts. In situations where conflicts had already begun, the Mechanism was entrusted to undertake peacemaking and peace-building functions.

11. His delegation welcomed the ideas and initiatives of a number of Member States on ways and means of improving the capacity to respond rapidly and effectively to emergency situations in Africa. At the same time, ensuring international peace and security in Africa or in any part of the world was the common responsibility of the international community as a whole. The establishment of the OAU Mechanism and the efforts it had made in conflict prevention, management and resolution testified to the desire and resolve of the African countries to shoulder their share of responsibility for ensuring peace and stability in their part of the world.

12. Ms. KOURULA (Deputy Director, New York Liaison Office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said that until the late 1980s, the interface between the efforts of the United Nations to maintain peace and security and the international community's endeavours to resolve refugee problems had remained very limited. Peace-keeping forces, operating under the supervision of the Security Council, and refugee organizations, functioning under the leadership of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had generally worked in different locations with different objectives. Over the past five years there had been major transformations in the efforts by UNHCR to protect and assist refugees. Traditionally, UNHCR programmes had been concentrated in the relatively safe and stable environments provided by countries of asylum. Since the early 1990s, however, the Office had become increasingly involved in protecting and assisting victims of conflict both within and outside their countries of origin. That new orientation had inevitably led UNHCR into closer forms of cooperation with the peace-keeping activities of the United Nations.

13. The development of that linkage between UNHCR and United Nations peace-keeping operations was the result of two conceptually distinct but closely related phenomena. On the one hand, new opportunities for the settlement of regional conflicts had, in recent years, allowed the United Nations to launch a number of large-scale post-conflict operations in countries where long-standing wars were drawing to an end. On the other hand, in the post-cold-war era, the United Nations, its Member States and their military forces had begun to intervene in new refugee-producing conflicts.

14. Collaboration between humanitarian organizations and peace-keeping operations had had far-reaching implications for both the delivery of

humanitarian assistance and the promotion of solutions for the problems of large numbers of refugees and displaced persons. From the perspective of UNHCR, the benefits of collaboration had been most apparent in post-conflict operations. Recent experience in countries such as Cambodia, El Salvador, Mozambique and Namibia, demonstrated that when the involvement of the United Nations in a country was based on agreement and its impartiality was broadly recognized, it was possible to plan and implement the humanitarian, political and military elements of an operation in an integrated manner. Experience gained in such operations clearly highlighted the importance of including humanitarian and human rights concerns, as well as the phased and orderly return of refugees, from the very beginning of the planning process.

15. Collaboration between peace enforcement operations or peace-keeping operations with a strong enforcement component and humanitarian agencies had had certain benefits. However, despite all those benefits, such collaboration had also been characterized by significant dangers and difficulties. Those difficulties had been particularly manifest in the case of operations carried out under Chapter VII of the Charter, or in mixed operations with an important enforcement component. The growing awareness of the difficulties inherent in peace enforcement might mean a trend away from such operations and a renewed emphasis on a more traditional peace-keeping role in post-conflict situations.

16. Mutual understanding and proper coordination between military and humanitarian activities could be achieved through measures to ensure improved preparedness, training of military personnel in humanitarian issues, joint planning and assessment missions, early agreement on responsibilities and other measures to promote effective communications and coordination. Collaboration on the ground, regular contacts at headquarters level and enhanced training activities had greatly increased the understanding of the respective roles of humanitarian agencies and peace-keeping operations.

17. Mr. SUWARDI (Indonesia) said that the United Nations played a crucial role in preventing and resolving conflicts worldwide by engaging in peace-keeping operations. Although the Organization's peace-keeping efforts had not always been successful, it had consistently promoted progress in negotiations between the parties to a conflict. In that process, it had in recent years expanded peace-keeping activities to include electoral assistance and the protection of humanitarian relief aid.

18. In the post-cold-war era, it was imperative to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations and its cooperation with regional organizations, not only in the field of peace-keeping but also in preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building. His delegation wished to stress the role of regional organizations and mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of disputes through dialogue and negotiations. In that regard, it believed that regional dialogue would provide the appropriate framework for promoting security and expanding cooperation.

19. His delegation attached great importance to the issue of reimbursement. Troop-contributing countries, particularly developing countries, were concerned about delays in reimbursement of troop costs. Unless effective measures were taken to redress that situation, it would not only undermine the success of current peace-keeping activities, but also impede the participation of developing countries in all future endeavours to maintain international peace and security. As to the expansion of the membership of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, his delegation believed that it should be an open-ended committee in order to reflect the interests and aspirations of Member States.

20. Mr. PALYA (Hungary) said that Hungary attached great importance to the issues of preventive diplomacy and preventive deployment of peace-keeping forces. It also believed that much still remained to be done. Preventive diplomacy was being invoked too often without actually being used in a timely and resolute fashion. The example of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in terms of effective resort to the preventive deployment of peace-keeping forces could serve as a useful model for other countries and territories in which religious and ethnic conflicts occurred. Hungary hoped that the relevant open-ended working groups would continue their work on that matter, and also that the recent initiatives of certain countries such as Canada, Denmark and the Netherlands would be implemented in order to enhance the rapid deployment capability of the United Nations. His delegation also welcomed the proposal by the Department of Peace-keeping Operations concerning the establishment of its rapidly deployable headquarters capability. As a member of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, Hungary fully supported the enlargement of that Committee. When considering possible ways and means of enlarging the Special Committee, it was also necessary to keep in mind its effectiveness and find ways in which the quality of its work could be further improved. The involvement of troop-contributing countries in the work of that Committee would probably serve that aim in the most appropriate manner.

21. In recent years, peace-keeping operations had become significantly more complex. So-called post-conflict peace-keeping measures were becoming increasingly important in sustaining a durable peace. The experience gained in Angola and in the territory of the former Yugoslavia showed that demilitarization, control of small arms, demining activity, monitoring and verification of human rights violations and facilitation of the return of displaced persons should be an essential part of contemporary peace-keeping operations. The role that could and should be played by the various regional organizations in the implementation of those very important tasks should not be overlooked.

22. Mr. FORERO (Colombia) said that peace-keeping operations were a useful mechanism, but that they should be used with caution and not simply be regarded as a ready formula for addressing each and every problem. It was vitally important for the international community to address the principal issues associated with the numerous conflicts throughout the world. Although the majority of conflicts were taking place in developing countries, the Security Council continued to ignore the appeal by the peoples of those countries for a change in priorities in the allocation of resources to development activities.

23. His delegation believed that the present downsizing of operations and the more substantial cut-backs that were envisaged in the near future were a result of the ineffectiveness of peace-keeping operations as a whole and of large-scale operations in particular; the Fourth Committee and the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations needed to make a careful study of the issue. His delegation believed that the Special Committee's broad mandate needed to be retained. Together with the Fourth Committee, it was a forum for Member States to analyse and assess peace-keeping operations from the political point of view.

24. The Non-Aligned Movement had insisted on the need for the Special Committee to address more general and topical issues, in particular the monitoring of compliance with the Charter and the general principles for the management of current and completed operations.

25. It should also be stressed that the Special Committee's mandate did not envisage consideration of questions that fell outside the scope of peace-keeping operations, nor of questions that fell within the competence of other bodies, such as preventive diplomacy, peacemaking mechanisms and peace-building. The Special Committee's report outlined the basic principles for the conduct of operations and indicated the need for strict compliance with those principles.

26. With regard to the question of the expansion of the Special Committee's membership, his delegation stressed the importance of expanding the membership by involving all Member States in its work. Its limited structure mirrored that of the Security Council and bore witness to the lack of democracy in discussions about peace-keeping operations. The lack of transparency in the consideration of items relating to peace-keeping operations had already created serious difficulties. It was inexcusable that the number of countries supplying contingents should exceed the number of members of the Committee. The real democratization of the Special Committee should be the aim of the consultations to be held at its session the following spring.

27. His delegation was concerned that not all Member States had supported the Organization's efforts to develop its potential for deploying rapid reaction forces in the future. The establishment of the staff structures necessary for rapid reaction forces was the first step towards making them a permanent reality. He believed that the Special Committee should study the matter carefully.

28. Mrs. HOANG THI CU (Viet Nam) said that the United Nations had made great efforts in the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as in the promotion of economic development and cooperation between countries. However, her delegation was still concerned that a number of fierce conflicts, chiefly internal conflicts, were still raging and causing untold suffering to innocent people.

29. Peace-keeping operations were an important instrument for the United Nations in the discharge of its mandate under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security. In all efforts to resolve conflicts and disputes, due attention needed to be given to the causes of such conflicts, many of which were rooted in social and economic development. In that regard, her delegation was concerned by the decline in international development assistance and the soaring cost of peace-keeping operations.

30. The General Assembly, which had a universal membership, should play a more active role in overseeing the management of peace-keeping operations. With regard to the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, her delegation believed that strict compliance with the provisions of the Charter was vital if the United Nations was to be able to discharge the responsibilities placed upon it by its Member States.

31. Her delegation thought it necessary to stress that, in order to resolve conflicts and preserve peace, United Nations peace-keeping operations should comply strictly with the principles of the Charter, in particular the principles of respect for national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. Peace-keeping operations should be conducted in accordance with clearly defined mandates, objectives and command structures, and they should have secure financing. The concept of multifunctional peace-keeping operations should be considered with caution.

32. Her delegation favoured retaining the mandate of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations in its present form and supported the expansion of the Committee's membership since peace-keeping was a collective responsibility of all Member States in its political, financial and legal aspects.

33. Mr. OULD ELY (Mauritania) said that the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations had highlighted the Organization's indispensable role in the fight for peace; ensuring peace was the Organization's priority task which governed all its other activities, particularly in the area of socio-economic development. Peace-keeping operations, which were one of the Organization's most important instruments for the maintenance of international peace and security, played an exceptionally important role in promoting the peaceful settlement of conflicts. All Member States should therefore create the most favourable conditions for the success of such operations.

34. One of the most promising trends in peace-keeping operations had been, without a doubt, the development of preventive diplomacy. The proposals contained in the "Supplement to An Agenda for Peace" and the report of Secretary-General (A/50/711) merited further study and the adoption of specific follow-up measures. In that regard, his delegation noted with satisfaction the cooperation that had already been initiated between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and he hoped that the Mechanism on Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa would receive both material and organizational support from the United Nations, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter.

35. Contrary to expectations, the end of the cold war had not signalled the start of a new era of peace. At a time when conflicts were flaring up almost everywhere, the United Nations responded with a mixture of traditional - primarily military - mechanisms and new forms of intervention such as cease-fire monitoring, the repatriation of refugees and the provision of humanitarian assistance. That variety of functions made the role of the United Nations even more indispensable.

36. Bearing in mind the increasing complexity of the tasks facing the Special Committee, his delegation noted with satisfaction the growing interest in its work and the desire of many countries to expand its membership. He gave credit to the operations personnel who were doing everything in their power to maintain peace. Mindful of the many dangers to which peace-keepers were exposed on a daily basis, the question of ensuring their safety had assumed extreme importance and his delegation hoped that the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, which had been adopted at the forty-ninth session, would soon enter into force.

37. Mr. BYAMUGISHA (Uganda) said that, with the ending of the cold war, the emphasis in the area of international peace and security had shifted from the East-West conflict to intra-State conflicts. Welcoming the Secretary-General's initiative, "An Agenda for Peace", he noted with gratitude the additional information provided in the report on preparedness for conflict prevention and peace-keeping in Africa (A/50/711). He appealed to the international community to render the support requested by the Secretary-General, which was essential to make the suggested initiatives work.

38. Africa had taken a major step on its own to respond to situations of potential and actual conflict on the continent through the establishment of the OAU Mechanism on Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. In strengthening activities related to peace-keeping at the global level, equal priority attention should be given to similar activities and initiatives at the regional level. In the case of the OAU Mechanism, the United Nations needed to provide it with the much needed financial and technical support for it to begin to operate effectively.

39. His delegation commended all countries of the region which, despite their difficult economic situations, had in one form or another supported the various initiatives at the subregional and regional levels. The enormous contribution of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in the peaceful resolution of the conflict in Liberia merited special recognition; it was to be hoped that the international community would give the ECOWAS Observer Group (ECOMOG) all the support if needed to reach a fruitful conclusion of its mandate.

40. Uganda wholeheartedly welcomed and supported all initiatives aimed at convening a conference on peace and security in the Great Lakes region. It had suggested that the good offices of eminent persons such as Mr. Julius Nyerere, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and President Jimmy Carter, who enjoyed the full confidence of the parties involved, should be used extensively in that regard.

41. If United Nations peace-keeping operations were to enjoy broad political support and confidence, it was very important that the Organization should be seen to be acting in all conflict situations in a transparent manner, and that it should play the role of an honest broker. There should be uniform rules of procedure and ground rules for participation in peace-keeping operations and commitment of armed forces in all regions. His delegation noted with concern that imbalances in that respect could only serve to undermine confidence in the Organization.

42. In the same vein, it was crucial to address the issue of clearly distinguishing between peace-keeping, as envisaged in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations, and peace enforcement, as envisaged in Chapter VII. While in both cases the agreed set of principles and guidelines should be adhered to, in the case of peace-keeping it was important that it should be undertaken with due regard for the principles of the consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force, except in cases where force was genuinely required for self-defence.

43. His delegation wished to associate itself with those which had called for the expansion of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, in view of the priority importance which peace-keeping activities had assumed in the United Nations, particularly in the case of Africa. Such expansion should take into account the interests of the actual or potential contributors to peace-keeping operations.

44. If the United Nations was to fulfil the challenging task of peace-keeping it had to be provided with sufficient resources. Despite its difficult financial situation, Uganda was endeavouring to meet its obligations at the earliest possible time. It also wished to underline that the financing of peace-keeping operations should reflect the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Accordingly, it fully supported the current arrangements whereby payments for peace-keeping operations were assessed in accordance with a special scale, not the regular budget scale of assessment.

45. Mr. RODRIGO (Sri Lanka) said that draft resolution A/C.4/50/L.10, in which the recommendations and conclusions of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations were endorsed in a concise form without repetition, was a reflection of the Committee's innovative approach to its work. Peace-keeping operations constituted possibly the most visible, and often the most controversial, aspect of United Nations activities, given the fact that in recent years they had gone beyond their traditional confines.

46. The volume of resources allocated to peace-keeping operations raised fundamental questions about the priorities of the Organization. His delegation considered that the priority tasks of development should not be sacrificed to the pursuit of politico-military operations, the objectives of which should be set at realistic, and even modest, levels. In view of the fact that conflicts stemmed basically from socio-economic factors, an inordinate emphasis on peace-keeping operations would have an adverse impact on development priorities. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General that the foundations of peace lay primarily in the realm of socio-economic development.

47. Taking into account the fact that conflicts tended to break out when a particular group ceased to feel that it had any stake in maintaining the status quo, it was particularly imperative that every encouragement should be given to national peace initiatives aimed at a political settlement. Such initiatives should become the starting-point for preventive diplomacy. United Nations intervention should be confined to situations which posed an unquestionable threat to international peace and security and where Security Council decisions were based on the clearly expressed support of the majority of Member States, rather than on the political exigencies of a few States, no matter how powerful they might be.

48. His delegation welcomed efforts to streamline the financing and management of peace-keeping operations and the provision of material and technical support for them. Genuine ways out of the financial crisis could be found more easily if all Member States were to pay their dues in full and on time. Given the fact that more than 80 countries were participating in United Nations peace-keeping operations, there was every reason to expand the membership of the Special Committee; that would serve to strengthen multilateral cooperation and enhance transparency in an area of United Nations activity which was of universal concern.

49. Mr. TASOVSKI (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), acknowledging the tremendous efforts made by the United Nations to find peaceful settlements to the growing number of conflicts of different kinds, including military conflicts, said that those efforts had unfortunately not always been as successful as had been hoped. Effective peace-keeping operations must have a clear mandate, as well as sufficient human and material resources. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the consultations between troop-contributing countries, members of the Security Council and the Secretariat; it also supported the recommendations and conclusions contained in document A/50/230.

50. Paramount importance also attached to the issue of safety and security of peace-keeping personnel, and his delegation strongly supported the International Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel.

51. The United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) had an enormous role to play in maintaining peace and stability in the southern Balkans. UNPREDEP represented the first ever deployment, in United Nations history, of military units as a measure of preventive diplomacy. The success of that operation was convincing proof that preventive deployment represented the most effective means for the implementation of peace-keeping efforts. The UNPREDEP experience could serve as a model for many future peace-keeping operations. In view of the special features of that mission, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia stressed that it should remain independent in terms of its theatre command and logistic support.

52. He conveyed the readiness of his Government to develop, in cooperation with the Secretariat, arrangements for participation in peace-keeping operations, and pointed out that all countries should pay their share of the financial burden of those operations. In conclusion, he said that his delegation supported draft resolution A/C.4/50/L.10.

53. Mr. SKRYPKO (Belarus) said that his delegation broadly supported the proposals and recommendations on ways of improving the financial mechanism for peace-keeping operations contained in chapter III of the report of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations (A/50/230). Belarus was keenly interested in the further comprehensive strengthening and enhancement of the Organization's role as a collective guarantor of international security.

54. Despite the considerable success achieved by the United Nations in settling certain long-standing conflicts, it had proved unable to carry out operations whose mandates included elements of peace enforcement. As recent experience had shown, where conflicting sides lacked the desire and political will to do so, the United Nations was unable to force them to refrain from the use of force. On the other hand, certain States and coalitions of States, and also regional organizations, had greater potential in the area of peacemaking. Undoubtedly, peace-keeping operations could only be conducted outside the framework of the United Nations if they were done so in consultation and coordination with the Organization, through the Security Council.

55. Noting the changing character of recent peace-keeping operations, he called for the elaboration of all-embracing principles, guidelines and procedures for the conduct of such operations. That would help Member States form a clear idea of the purposes and functions of specific operations. At the same time, the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as such fundamental criteria of peacemaking as impartiality, the non-use of force (except for self-defence) and the consent of the conflicting parties to the deployment of operations, should be observed. In addition, the mandates of operations should be clear and realistic and carefully tailored to the resources available and should establish the main political objectives and timetables.

56. His delegation stressed the need for a clear delimitation between the mandates and structure of peace-keeping operations carried out under chapter VI of the Charter and of those carried out under chapter VII. Operations using military force could only be conducted for an extremely limited period and on condition all peaceful means of settlement, provided for in the Charter, had been exhausted.

57. Since the focus of attention should be on the strengthening of the Organization's capacity for the early prevention of conflicts, rather than on measures for their subsequent settlement, his delegation believed that the functions of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and of other divisions of the Secretariat involved in observing political developments in potential conflict areas, in early warning and in analysing the possibility of preventive action should be strengthened. In addition, it welcomed the establishment, within the Department, of a unit for studying lessons learned.

58. The Supplement to an Agenda for Peace, prepared by the Secretary-General, stated that the main obstacle to preventive action was often "the reluctance of one or other of the parties to accept United Nations help". That contradictory state of affairs must be overcome, including through the promotion of a universally acceptable view that it should be standard practice for States Members to consent to the conduct by the Secretary-General of missions of good offices. On the whole, his delegation believed that the identification and

prevention of the root causes of conflicts should be both the immediate and the long-term task of preventive diplomacy.

59. His delegation supported the conclusion reached by the Special Committee at its previous session, that the proposals for the creation by the United Nations of a rapid reaction force needed further careful elaboration, taking into account all the political, financial and legal implications of such a measure. The United Nations should not be transformed into an organization with military functions. One option which merited particular attention was the system of standby arrangements, the indisputable advantages of which included both efficiency and flexibility. The issue of Belarus' involvement in peace-keeping operations, including through participation in the standby arrangements, was currently being considered by the relevant legislative and executive authorities.

60. His delegation attached great importance to the issue of strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Organization of African Unity. That applied particularly to preventive diplomacy and peace-keeping, in which regional organizations had more opportunity for achieving positive results, and transferring specific powers to the regional level was highly advisable. It was also essential that States members of the relevant regional organizations should reach agreement in principle on the adoption by those organizations of all possible measures for the peaceful settlement of conflicts before they were submitted for consideration by the Security Council.

61. The important and complex issue of funding peace-keeping operations required constant attention. Given the imperfect nature of the existing scale of assessment for the financing of such operations, many member States had found themselves unable to discharge their financial obligations to the Organization. A clear and rational system of preparing and implementing the budgets, financing and administrative management of such operations had not yet been fully worked out. Further improvements to the system of contract procurement in that area were required. The issues of increased control over the use of resources allocated and of the investigations of cases of financial abuse remained on the agenda. Another continuing problem concerned the payment of compensation to countries contributing troops and technology.

62. Lastly, his delegation supported the view of the majority of delegations regarding the need to increase the number of members of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, which could be characterized as a joint effort to achieve democratization and increased transparency within the various bodies of the United Nations system.

63. Mr. RI Jang Gon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that his delegation shared the view of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Activities that it was most important to stick to the principles of respect for sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs and impartiality, adding that encouragement should be given to efforts to resolve disputes through peaceful means. In that regard his delegation thought it necessary to review the concept

of "peace enforcement", since it was inconsistent with the peace mission of the United Nations.

64. The 50-year history of the United Nations showed that peace-keeping operations that were used to further the political interests of other countries had not only failed, but had aggravated the situation. United Nations "intervention" in the Korean war in 1950 was a typical example. That "intervention" should not be seen as a special form of United Nations peace-keeping activities. A fairly large number of Security Council resolutions relating to peace-keeping activities had been adopted. The "resolution" of the Council to dispatch troops to Korea had been adopted despite the fact that one permanent member of the Council had been absent and a number of others had either rejected the resolution or had not participated in the voting. It had been a gross violation of Article 27, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations. His Government had put forward a proposal to establish a new peace mechanism in place of the old armistice system. The main stumbling block to the realization of such a new peace arrangement lay in the fact that the flag of the United Nations was still being abused. In the wake of the armistice those countries whose troops had joined the United States of America in the Korean war had withdrawn their forces from South Korea, where only United States forces currently remained under the label of "United Nations forces". The presence of the "United Nations Command", over which the United Nations had no jurisdiction, inevitably caused tension in the relations of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with the United Nations. Such a situation was highly abnormal in view of the international trend towards détente, but the Organization's "intervention" in the Korean war had been depicted as a success on several occasions in 1995.

65. Recalling General Assembly resolution 3390 B (XXX) of 18 November 1975, his delegation called on the United Nations to meet its obligation under the resolution, at least to the extent of drawing the United Nations flag from the United States command.

66. Mr. DOMINGO (Philippines) said that, as had been enunciated at the recent Conference of Heads of State and Government and the Ministerial Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement, all peace-keeping operations should abide strictly by the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Furthermore, they should not be the preferred method of containing conflicts, since early negotiation and political resolution, avoiding the resort to arms, were undoubtedly a better way. Together with other member States of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Philippines was studying the recommendations on enlisting the support of regional organizations for peace-keeping operations. ASEAN held an annual ministerial dialogue on regional peace and security. The Philippines was exploring the possibility of offering its military training and basing facilities as part of a regional peace-keeping establishment. Standby arrangements were also being studied by its military authorities.

67. His delegation was gratified that the latest report of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations had incorporated the call by many delegations for the improvement of peace-keeping operations in a number of ways. A set of guidelines and principles governing peace-keeping operations in

general, as well as clear mandates for particular operations with distinct time-frames and objectives, needed to be formulated. The direction of operations needed to be improved and their command, communications, control and intelligence systems needed to be enhanced, together with their coordination with other United Nations activities. The broadening of participation in and support for peace-keeping operations was a leading priority, through greater democratization and transparency both in the decision-making process within the Security Council and in the composition of the Special Committee. There was a need for enhanced coordination between the Council and the General Assembly and between the Council and troop-contributing Member States.

68. Although the issue of financing peace-keeping operations was mainly within the purview of the Fifth Committee, it was worth recalling that all States should shoulder their financial responsibilities and that development projects of the United Nations should not suffer as a result of funding shortfalls. There was also a pressing need to find an effective solution to the problem of delays in reimbursement for troop and equipment costs and the establishment of a uniform scale of compensation and death and injury benefits.

69. His delegation strongly believed that the membership of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations should be open-ended, since it considered that peace-keeping was a collective responsibility and that thus all Member States of the United Nations should in principle participate in deliberations on such operations.

70. Mr. OLIYNYK (Ukraine) said that, given the growing importance in current conditions of United Nations peace-keeping operations, his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's very timely paper entitled "Supplement to an agenda for peace". The most recent session of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations had marked an important stage in the development within the United Nations of a modern concept of peace-keeping. His delegation noted with satisfaction that many of the points made in the memorandum of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine were reflected in the Special Committee's report on the results of its most recent session (A/50/230). The new concept of United Nations peace-keeping operations should combine the experience of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union and other international organizations, as well as defining a system of coordinating the diplomatic, humanitarian, military and other components of peace-keeping and formulating a set of guidelines for peace-keeping operations. Special attention should be paid to the development of a mechanism for preventive diplomacy. His delegation believed that it would be useful at the current stage, to entrust the Joint Inspection Unit with the preparation of a study on the relationship between preventive diplomacy and peace-keeping operations.

71. Ukraine shared the opinion expressed in the Special Committee's report on the importance of cooperation in the area of peace-keeping operations between the United Nations and the regional organizations. At the same time, the principle according to which no individual State or regional organization had the right to be the "main guarantor" of peace and security in one or another region should be strictly observed in the course of peace-keeping operations at the regional level.

72. Ukraine had always attached great importance to its participation in peace-keeping operations, regarding it as one of the most important elements of its foreign policy. Ukrainian military personnel were serving in the United Nations forces in the former Yugoslavia and in the mission to Tajikistan. Ukraine was playing an active part in the peaceful settlement of the conflict in the Dniester region and had repeatedly expressed its willingness to participate in the activities of the United Nations and OSCE missions to Georgia and Nagorny Karabakh. The practical work of training a bridging unit for the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III) had begun. Within the framework of the "Partnership for Peace" programme of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Ukrainian military personnel had participated in 10 joint exercises to prepare for peace-keeping and humanitarian operations under the aegis of the United Nations and OSCE.

73. The safety of personnel remained one of the most urgent problems in United Nations peace-keeping operations. Given the increased frequency of late of attacks on peace-keepers and the civilian population, his delegation considered it necessary once again to condemn such actions and to draw special attention to the use by the parties to conflicts of land-mines and snipers. Ukraine urged all States Members of the United Nations, first and foremost those countries participating in peace-keeping operations, to expedite the ratification of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel to enable its speedy entry into force. His delegation believed it to be vital that the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations should undertake a comprehensive study on the use of snipers against peace-keepers.

74. Ukraine welcomed the practice, initiated in 1995 by the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, of holding regional workshops for the training of personnel involved in peace-keeping operations. It was crucial to draft and approve promptly a code of conduct for United Nations peace-keeping personnel which would serve as a fundamental set of normative rules defining the moral and legal protection accorded to peace-keepers and their obligations.

75. The financial problems of the United Nations were one of the main obstacles to the successful implementation of its peace-keeping operations. His delegation believed that the difficulties of financing peace-keeping operations could be solved only through comprehensive and far-reaching reform of the entire system of funding United Nations activities, which should be based on the principle of the real capacity of Member States to pay. Based on that principle, his delegation favoured transferring Ukraine from group B to group C in the scale of assessments for United Nations peace-keeping operations.

76. In the context of the radical reform of the existing United Nations system, decisions must be taken regarding the widening of the membership of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations. The time had come to grant equal status to all States Members of the United Nations which, through their specific and practical input to the most noble of United Nations missions, made a considerable contribution to maintaining international peace and security.

77. Mr. SEDLÁK (Slovakia) said that his delegation supported the expansion of the current membership of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations. Its transformation into an open-ended committee was undoubtedly the most

democratic solution, but that might make its work more complicated. Excluding Member States on the basis of late payments to the peace-keeping budget might really halt the work of the Committee, as it would affect the smaller and weaker countries, as well as some of those which bore the heaviest burden of responsibility for maintaining peace and security in the world. Moreover, it was well known that some countries had serious difficulties in paying their assessed contributions due to immense delays in obtaining reimbursement for their participation in peace-keeping operations.

78. Regarding the view that membership in the Special Committee should be limited to troop-contributing countries, his delegation wished to stress that if such an approach were adopted, the notion of "troop-contributing countries" would have to be defined very carefully. It should include those which contributed not only troops, but also observers, as well as non-military components of peace-keeping operations. Criteria would also have to be defined for those countries which for objective reasons could not send troops, and for the category of affected States. As for the approach which envisaged some sort of rotation in the membership, it did not seem the best solution, and would not contribute to making the Committee's work more transparent.

79. It was to be hoped that the search for really efficient ways for the Committee to work or the definition of a set of criteria for its membership would be high on the agenda at its next session. His delegation welcomed the newly adopted division of work between the Fourth Committee and the Special Committee; it would be best if discussions concerning the mandate of the Special Committee were held in that Committee. It was for the Fourth Committee to evaluate the work of the Special Committee, to ask it for expert opinions, or to entrust it with resolving specific peace-keeping issues. His delegation supported the Finnish proposal for a more focused approach in the work of the Special Committee, and considered that a similar division of labour might be developed between the Special Committee and the troop-contributors' meetings.

80. Slovakia would continue to participate actively in peace-keeping operations through its engineering battalion within the United Nations peace-keeping forces and military observers in the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM). His Government was prepared to participate further in resolving the conflict in the former Yugoslavia and then in maintaining peace in that territory, to expand its presence in some observer missions, and to make use of its experts in the civilian components of peace-keeping missions.

81. Mr. BOGOREH (Djibouti) said that in recent years the limitations of traditional peace-keeping operations had become clear. The international community should learn a lesson from its repeated failures, particularly in Somalia, Rwanda, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. There was no sense in sending soldiers to risk their lives only to have them stand by and watch rapes, acts of genocide, the shelling of the civilian population and the killing of children. Peace-keeping operations should adapt to new types of conflict, with account being taken of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

82. His delegation supported the idea of sending a small mission whenever necessary to assess the situation and make recommendations to the Security Council concerning the most appropriate type of operation and its mandate. As

for the mandate, he considered that the best solution was to give some room for manoeuvre to those in the field. Regarding duration, it was necessary, while taking into account the need to avoid prolonged operations - especially during the current period of crisis within the Organization - to exercise some restraint as to the setting of excessively tight schedules. The reason for that position was the unsuccessful outcome of the operation in Somalia; after a total of three years, the United Nations had left on the pretext that the Somali people had not succeeded in establishing a peaceful climate within the period fixed by the Security Council. The country had been left completely ravaged by war, with no Government or system of administration. Meanwhile, operations that had begun decades ago were still continuing, and nobody had any objection. In order to uphold the authority of the Organization, a selective approach to crises in different regions of the world should be entirely avoided.

83. United Nations peace-keeping operations would be more effective if carried out in cooperation with regional organizations and structures; they had the advantage of being better informed, and because of their proximity to situations of conflict, they were more concerned about them, and that enabled them to play an important role, particularly in the prevention of conflicts. For that very reason, in June 1993 the Organization of African Unity (OAU) had created a mechanism for the prevention, control and settlement of conflicts. The international community should assist that undertaking by providing to OAU the resources which would enable it to strengthen the region's potential for conducting peace-keeping operations. His delegation was gratified to observe the increasingly close cooperation between the United Nations and OAU, and unreservedly supported the Secretary-General's recommendations, which were intended to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of that cooperation.

84. In the opinion of his delegation, peace-keeping could not take the place of a political settlement, and it was important to combat the root causes of conflict, particularly when they arose from economic and social factors. The point was that countries affected by conflicts should be provided not only with appropriate humanitarian aid, but also, above all, with development aid and help with the restoration or strengthening of their political and administrative structures. Otherwise, peace would be short-lived. Furthermore, the international community should show greater awareness of the needs of neighbouring countries, whose already weak socio-economic infrastructures were often severely affected by the presence of thousands of refugees who had fled from the fighting.

85. His delegation noted the new arrangements for consultations and exchanges of information between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries, and felt that the consultations should be held more regularly. In conclusion, he paid tribute to the memory of those who had given their lives for the peace and well-being of humanity.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.